

NEW LIVESTOCK ACCOMMODATION LAW

Britain's livestock farmers faced tough and expensive new laws on ventilation systems for housed stock from January 1991.

All producers with automatic ventilation systems for intensive livestock accommodation have to provide an alarm and back-up in case of failure, and adequate alternative equipment to take over if the ventilation fails, to prevent stock suffering. Alarms and equipment must be checked, tested and inspected at least once a week by a competent person, and defects must be rectified immediately.

A typical example of the impact made by the new Welfare of Livestock Regulations is the case of a northern England producer. It will cost the pig farmer David Marginson about £6000 to comply with the regulations. His buildings house a 250-sow finishing unit. Electricity power cuts happen about twice a year at his Constitution Hill Farm near Beverley, in Yorkshire, but Mr. Marginson has had no losses, although it was vital that doors and side ventilation flaps were opened as soon as possible, and a neighbour's generator borrowed to help air the unit.

It is possible the insurance company would not pay out if Mr. Marginson did not comply with the regulations, but he admits it is worth the cost for the welfare of the stock.

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